



OFFICE OF THE  
**STATE AUDITOR**

**News Release**

**For Immediate Release**

**January 23, 2019**

**Office of the State Auditor Releases its  
Special Project Report on Fayette Town**

***Former Town Clerk Misappropriated over \$300,000 during 9-year period***

**Salt Lake City, UTAH –**

The Office of the State Auditor (Office) today released its Special Project Report on Fayette Town (Town) for the period February 2009 to February 2018. As a newly elected mayor, Brenda Leifson began to review the financial practices of the Town. As a result, she reported concerns regarding misappropriation of funds. In May 2018, the office of Sanpete County Sheriff, Brian Nielson requested our assistance to investigate the magnitude of possible theft by the former town clerk.

The Office determined that the former town clerk misappropriated over \$300,000 during a 9-year period without detection, an amount comprising over 12% of the town budget. Town officials failed to provide adequate oversight of the financial activity of the Town as the measures to conceal the theft used by the former town clerk were unsophisticated and fairly easy to detect.

Auditor John Dougall said, “Town Officials failed in one of the most basic duties of elected officials, the separation of the duties of clerk and treasurer as required by law. Had they done so, it likely could have prevented or mitigated this theft. I applaud the conscientiousness of Mayor Leifson and the diligence of Sheriff Nielson and his team.”

The report may be found on the Office’s website at [auditor.utah.gov](http://auditor.utah.gov) and specifically at: <https://reporting.auditor.utah.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=0151K000003I8PZQAY> .

**About the Office of the State Auditor**

The Office of the State Auditor provides Utah taxpayers and government officials with an independent assessment of financial operation, statutory compliance, and performance management for state and local government.

Specific activities of the Office include performing financial audits, conducting Federal funds compliance audits, providing local government oversight, conducting agency and program

performance audits, performing fraud and compliance audits, and operating the State Auditor Hotline for citizens to report suspected financial issues or improprieties. These capabilities strengthen Utah State Government and help taxpayers have confidence in the integrity of Utah's government agencies.

The State Auditor is a Constitutional Officer of the State of Utah, elected directly by the state's citizens every four years. The role of the State Auditor is authorized in Article VII, Section 15 of the Utah Constitution. For more information, see [auditor.utah.gov](http://auditor.utah.gov).

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